

THE NATURAL HISTORY
OF
THE GENT.



BY ALBERT SMITH.

SIXTH EDITION.

LONDON: D. BOGUE, FLEET STREET.

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90340

Mr. Meyer



"Come along, my r-r-r-r-rummy cove; come along ! how are you ?
how d'ye do ? here we are my bricksywicksywicksy !!!"

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PREFACE.

IN the Sunday newspapers of May 24, of the past year, 1846, appeared the following paragraph :—

MARYLEBONE.

A “GENT.”—A respectable-looking man, named James Dickenson, was charged by Brooks, 169 S, who said, “Please your worship, at two o’clock yesterday morning (Monday), I found this ‘gent’ drunk in Park Road, and took him into custody.”

Mr. Rawlinson : Who do you say you found drunk ?

Constable : This “gent,” your worship.

Mr. Rawlinson : What do you mean by “gent?” There is no such word in our language. I hold a man who is called a “gent” to be the greatest

blackguard there is. (To the prisoner): What do you say to this? I hope you are not a "gent."

Prisoner: I am not, sir, and I trust that I know the distinction between a "gent" and a "gentleman."

Mr. Rawlinson: I dare say you do, sir, and I look upon the word "gent" as one of the most blackguard expressions that can be used.

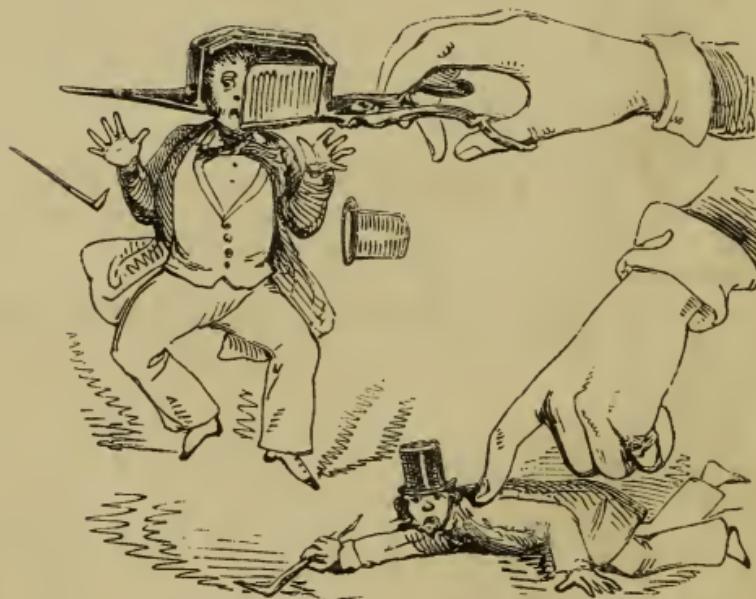
The prisoner was fined 5s., which he directly paid.

We were exceedingly delighted when we read this police report. We had laboured, for three or four years, to bring the race of Gents into universal contempt; and we at last found that an intelligent and respected London magistrate had publicly stated, from the bench, his opinion of the miserable class in question; and that it exactly coincided with our own. But fearing—from seeing the odious word still starting up in shops, ticketed to wild

articles of dress, to be hereafter alluded to, as well as hearing it every now and then applied by one “party” to another of his acquaintance—that the species was not yet extinct; fearing this, in spite of our direct attacks in *Punch* and *Bentley's Miscellany*, and our side-wind blows through the medium of our esteemed friend John Parry, certain burlesques at the Lyceum, and various other channels—we determined upon reconsidering all we had ever propounded on the subject, and publishing it in the form now presented to the reader, that all might clearly see who the Gents were, and shun them accordingly.

And so we leave our little book in your hands, published at a price, as a prospectus always says, “that will bring it within the

reach of all classes." And we request your co-operation towards the great end of putting Gents out altogether. For they form an offensive body, of more importance than you would at first conceive; and both public and private society will be much benefited by their extinction.



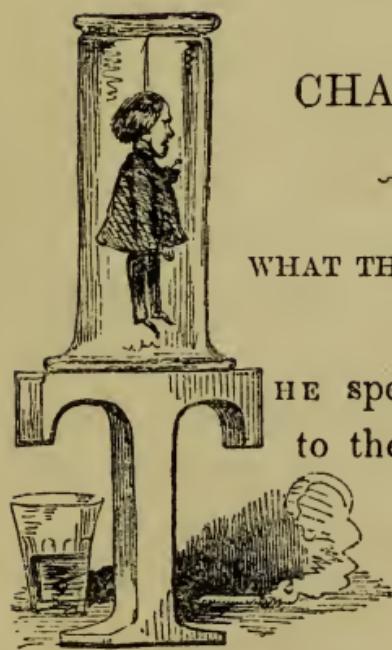
THE NATURAL HISTORY
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CHAPTER I.



WHAT THE GENT IS GENERALLY.



THE species of the human race, to the consideration of which we are about to draw the attention of the reader, is of all others the most unbearable, principally from an assumption of

style about him—a futile aping of superiority that inspires us with feelings of mingled contempt and amusement, when we contemplate his ridiculous pretensions to be considered “the thing.”

The Gent is of comparatively late creation. He has sprung from the original rude untutored man by combinations of chance and cultivation, in the same manner as the later varieties of fancy pippins have been produced by the devices of artful market-gardeners, from the original stock wild crab of the hedges. The fashion which Gents have of occasionally addressing one another as “my pippin” favours this analogy: and when they use this figure of speech, they pronounce it as follows,—placing great stress on the first letter, and then waiting awhile for the rest,—“Ullo, my P—ippin!”

After much diligent investigation, we find no mention made of the Gent in the writings of authors who flourished antecedent to the last ten years.

In the older works we meet with “*bucks*” and “*gay blades*” and “*pretty fellows*;” and later with “*men upon town*,” “*swells*,” and “*downy ones*,” or “*knowing coves*:” but the pure Gent comes not under any of these orders. He was not known in these times. He is scarcely understood now so universally as we could wish; but we trust that his real character will, before long, be properly appreciated. He is evidently the result of a variety of our present condition of society—that constant wearing struggle to appear something more than we in reality are, which now characterizes every body, both in their public and private phases.

Our attention was first called to the Gents in the following manner:—

We were in the habit of occasionally coming into contact with certain individuals, who when they spoke of their acquaintances were accustomed to say “I know a Gent,” or, “A Gent

told me." Never by any good luck did we hear them speak of Gentlemen. But it occurred that we chanced, on future occasions, to see one or two of the Gents above alluded to, and then we understood what they were.

The first Gent we ever saw, we encountered on the roof of an omnibus, with his hat a little on one side, and a staring shawl round his



neck. He was also smoking a cigar, as he sat next to the driver, in order that he might reap the benefit of his anecdotes and remarks concerning the horses and vehicle, to which the Gent replied at intervals, "Ah," and "Yes," and "I should say not," and "Just so," with other similar phrases used to fill up unmeaning dialogue. We heard him speak of "a Party he knew," and he was very much interested at hearing that the off-horse worked "in the fust bus as ever Shillibeer started, and was took from the Angel to be put on the Elephant." He was also informed of the singular speculation in which "the guvner give a fippun note for that little mare, and was offered eight sovrins for her within a week, though she was a reg'lar bag o' bones;" upon which the Gent observed that "very often those sort of horses were the best." Having delivered himself of which opinion, he rolled his cigar about in his mouth, gave a whiff in our face, and then

removed it between his middle and ring-finger, to offer it to another Gent on the roof, who begged the favour of a light.

The next Gent we met was in the street. He wore large check trowsers of the true light comedian pattern, which appeared to have been made expressly for Mr. Walter Lacy, or Mr. Wright: and he had on a short odd coat; such a one as that in which Mr. Buckstone might be expected to go to a ball. He carried a little stick of no earthly use, with a horse's silver hoof on the top of it, which he kept to his lips always; and he also patronised the staring shawl and cigar; and he evidently imagined that he was “rather the Stilton than otherwise”—“*Stilton*” or “*cheese*” being terms by which Gents imply style or fashion. He was pursuing a pretty girl of modest deportment, who was possibly going home—for it was evening, when Gents and cheap umbrellas chiefly flourish—after her hard day's toil at a bonnet-shop. The Gent

had not the sense to see that his advances were



repulsed with scorn and indignation. He

imagined that by addressing his coarse annoying gallantry to an unprotected girl, he was acting as if he was "upon town," "a fast man," "up to a thing or two," or some other such epithet, which it is the ambition of the Gent to get attached to his name.

We met the next Gent in the boxes at one of the theatres, whither he had come in the full-dress of a light blue stock, and cleaned white gloves re-dirtied. We knew they had been cleaned ; they exhaled a faint camphine odour, as he put his hand on the brass rail and leant over us, and there was none of that sharpness of outline in their dirt which new gloves evince : it was denser, cloudier, more universal ; and the knuckles and nails were remarkably so. This Gent also had a little stick. He lighted a cigar at the lobby-lamp on leaving the house, and pulled a staring shawl out of his hat as he whistled an air from one of the burlesques. He went over to the Albion,

the room of which was quite full ; and after standing in the centre for a few seconds—



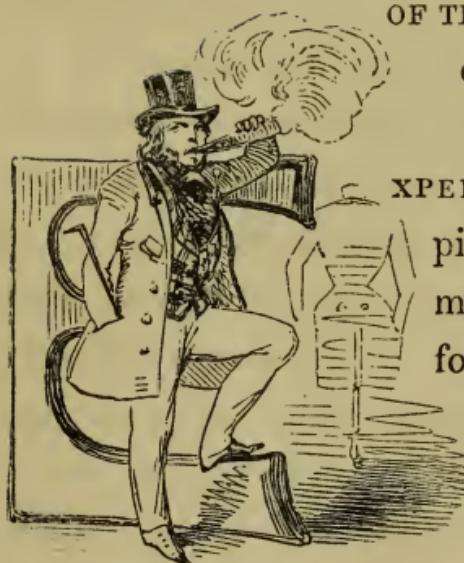
tapping his teeth with his stick, whilst his left hand was thrust into the hinder pocket of his coat, dragged round to his hip—apparently disgusted at not creating any sensation, he turned round on his heel, and crossing Covent Garden, ultimately dived into Evans's.

Then we thought that the Gents must be a race by themselves, which social naturalists had overlooked, deserving some attention ; and we determined to study their habits, and allot to them a certain position which at that time they did not appear to have.



CHAPTER II.

OF THE MANNER BY WHICH GENTS ARE KNOWN.



EXPERIENCE proves that pictures are the best media for conveying information at the outset of tuition. Hence, in the study of Natural History, for

instance, tyros learn the animals with their letters: their hornbooks have zoological alphabets, coloured in tints more or less eccentric; and, although led away by the representations, they sometimes read "A for donkey, B for great cow, C for poor puss," yet, on the whole, the way is a good one.

So, we will teach those not yet well up in the manner, by pictures, how they may know the Gents.

The finest specimens may be seen in the coloured “Fashions,” with which certain comically-disposed tailors adorn their windows. In these presumed representations of prevalent style, some favourite west-end locality is taken for the background ; and, in front, are many Gents, in such attitudes as may display their figures and little boots to the best advantage. Some are supposed to be arrayed for an evening party, in green dress-coats and puce tights. Some, again, are represented as sportsmen, with pinched-in waists, that the shock of the first leap, or the kick of the first shot, would knock in half; and others are promenade Gents, in frock coats and corded trowsers, bowing to one another with much grace, or leading little Gents by the hand, who look like animated daguerreotypes of themselves. Well, then,



these are Gents, *pur sang*. Observe, as the showman says, observe their fashionably-shaped hats, their Lilliputian boots, their tiny gloves. There is no deception. Observe that all their positions are evidently the result of much study ; and that the greater part of them have one arm

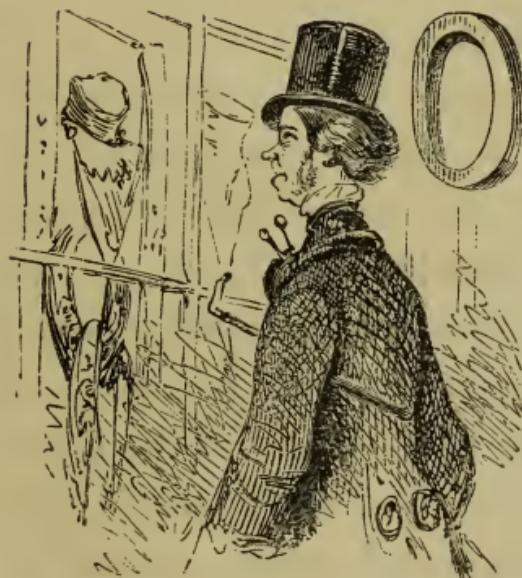
elevated, and the palm open, with the air of a conjurer when he says,—“ You will perceive I have nothing in my hand.”

Of the same family as these Gents, are the fashionable loungers in pantomimes, who walk about with the distinguished females in the scanty *visites* of pink glazed calico, trimmed with ermine; and the lovers in the blue coats and white trowsers on the sixpenny valentines, who direct the attention of the adored one to the distant village church.



CHAPTER III.

OF THE CHIEF OUTWARD CHARACTERISTICS OF
THE GENT.



ONE has only to look into the advertisements of cheap tailors, and the windows of ticketed shops, to form a very good notion of the other principal marks by which the Gent may be distinguished.

It should be borne in mind, that the main object of the Gent is to assume a position which he conceives to be superior to his own.

Now this, he fancies, is in a great measure accomplished by out-of-the-way clothes—a mark of superiority which has the advantage of requiring but a small outlay of intellect; and cunning manufacturers invent things on purpose to suit this taste, as the men of Manchester export gay-coloured, large-figured patterns for the negroes.

For him the cheap Tailor announces the “Gent’s Vest”—which is the Hebrew for “Snob’s Waistcoat”—as patronised by the nobility. To catch his eye alone, are the representations of men of *ton* put at the side of the advertisements; and, for his inspection, do the dummies stand at the doors of the shops, invested in the splendour of an entire suit, with an impossible waist, “made to measure for the same terms.”

And we may observe that the Gents usually speak of their get-up as *the ticket*—the term possibly being used in allusion to the badge which distinguished their various articles of dress when exposed for sale. And, in writing these, the leaning of the Gents towards distinguished associations is very evident. A great coat must be a “Chesterfield,” a “Taglioni,” or a “Codrington;” a little rag of coloured silk for the neck is called a “Byron Tie;” and so on. If the things are not dignified by these terms, the Gent does not think much of them.

To his taste does the ready-made Shoemaker appeal in the short fancy *Alberts*, ticketed “The Fashion.” If you are accustomed to derive a little gratuitous amusement from shop windows, as you go along the streets, you will see in them the funniest things, meant for the Gents, that it is possible to conceive. The most favourite style of *chaussure* is a species of cloth-boot, with a shiny-leather toe, and



a close row of little mother-of-pearl shirt-buttons down the front; not for any purpose, for they are simply sewn on, the real method of fastening on the brodequin being by the humble lace and tag of domestic life, at the side.

But it is with the Haberdashers that the toilet of the Gents comes out strongest.

You will see "Gents' Dress Kid" ticketed in the window. Be ye sure that the are large sized, awkwardly cut, yellow kid gloves, at

one-and-sixpence. The tint is evidently a weakness with the Gents, who think them dashing, and say they come from *Hoobegongs*. But the merchants, lacking discrimination, believe that the predisposition is general. We will wager a dozen pairs of them that you never went into one of these establishments, and simply and decidedly demanded a pair of white kid gloves, but you were immediately asked "if you would not prefer straw-coloured ?"

And then the stocks—what marvellous cravats they form ! Blue always the favourite colour—blue, with gold sprigs ! blue, with a crimson floss-silk flower ! blue Joinvilles, with rainbow ends ! And, if they are black and long, they are fashioned into quaint conceits : Frills of black satin down the front, or bands of the same fabric looking like an imitation of crimped skate ; or studs of jet made like buttons, as if the Gent wore a cheap, black

satin shirt, and that was where it fastened. And the white stocks are more fanciful still. They are not very popular in their simple form ; for the Gents feel that they cannot help looking like waiters in them ; and so a little illegitimate finery is necessary. Hence they have lace ends, like the stamped papers from the top of *bon-bon* and French plum boxes. And the effect in society is very fine.

The Jewellers consult the Gents, and for them manufacture various dashing articles in electro-gold. Some of the ornaments for the cravat are like large white currants, with gilt eels twisting round them ; and others like blanket-pins with water on the brain. We have also seen some sporting Gents—of whom we shall hereafter speak—with mosaic gold heads of horses and foxes stuck in their stocks. And they love rings in profusion, which we have seen them at times wear outside their gloves. But this, perhaps, was an advantage,

as Gents are accustomed, in general, to wear their hands large and red, with flattened ends to the fingers.

It is for the Gents to buy, that the print-sellers put forward those dreary pictures of the *Pets of the Ballet*; consisting chiefly of chubby young persons, in short petticoats and ungraceful attitudes, like nothing ever seen on the



stage anywhere; and coloured lithographs of housemaids cleaning steps; and chambermaids with flat candlesticks in their hands; and women with large black dots of eyes and heavy ringlets, trying on shoes. One was very popular a little time ago. It represented a young lady something between a hairdresser's dummy and a barmaid, with a man's coat and hat on over her own dress. She was looking through



an eye-glass at the top of a whip, and underneath was written “*damme!*”—why, or wherefore, or in what relation to the singular mode of toilet she has adopted, or what the word itself meant in the abstract, we never could make out. But the Gents seemed to know all about it, and bought the picture furiously.

By the tokens above mentioned—including always the staring shawl and the *al fresco* cigar—you may know the Gent when you see him, even if you met him on the top of Mont Blanc—a place, however, where you are not very likely to encounter him. He prefers Windmill Hill.



CHAPTER IV.

OF THE GENT AT THE THEATRE.



WHEN the Promenade Concerts usurped the place of the regular Drama at our theatres, and Koenig and Musard occupied the places of Kean and Macready—when Juliet was neglected for Jullien, Prospero for Prospère, and Viola for the violins, the Gent was exceedingly

gratified thereby. The Promenade became his Paradise; and he used to walk round and round, keeping his face towards the audience (admiring the young ladies in the dress tier),



with the pertinacity of the grand banners in stage processions; which, painted only on one side, appear to be endowed with some heliotropic principle, that causes their emblazoned surfaces to revolve always on the same plane with the footlights. But, whilst the Gent conceived that he was here “doing it—rather,” in the railway trowsers and dazzling stock, he totally forgot that the true *flaneur* would appear in something like evening costume, although he might not altogether adopt the extreme *rigueur*.

We were rather inquieted as to what the Gents would do when these concerts closed. We made great search, and found at length that the majority emigrated to the musical taverns, where they contrived to get through the evening under the combined influence of Bellini, bottled beer, and brandy-and-water; deriving additional excitement from the novelty of seeing *Somnambula* performed through a haze of tobacco-smoke.

But the theatre proper, is a favourite resort of the Gent, and half-price to the boxes his usual plan of patronising it; more especially when there is a ballet. Of the different parts of the house he prefers the slips. If you are seated opposite, you will see him come in about nine o'clock, and, leaving the panel door open, he stands on the seat, with his hands in his pockets, his stick under his arm, and thus makes his observations. Presently getting disgusted at the want of respect shown to him by an old gentleman in front, who is watching the performance most intently, with his head reclining on his arms, which are again supported by the rail, and who requests that he will have the goodness to shut the door, the Gent walks grandly away, and goes round to the other side, evidently conceiving that his dignity has been hurt. Here the same process of observation is repeated; and, if the Gent sees a pretty girl in a private box, he stares unflinchingly at her,



until he thinks he has made an impression. And this is a strange lunatic notion with Gents of every degree: they believe they have powers to fascinate every female upon whom they cast their eyes, never thinking of the utter contempt always excited by such obtrusiveness on the part of an entire stranger.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE GENT, AFTER THE PLAY, AT A TAVERN.



Ry the following signs may the Gent at this period be known:

He walketh six abreast under the Piazza, singing a negro air in chorus; and, perchance, danceth a lively measure to the *refrain*, until he arriveth at the entrance

of Evans's Grand Hotel. He descendeth the stairs, and, on entering the room, he goeth to the upper end thereof; and, having greeted the singers with a wink, calleth out “Charles!” No response being made by the waiter, he rappeth with his stick upon the table, until the peppercastor falleth on the floor; for which unseemly conduct Evans mildly reproveth him. He taketh a sight at Evans in return, when he can do so unobserved, and saith that he liketh him not so well as Rhodes: and then he calleth “Henry!” Being served with the rabbit of Wales, he saith to the funny singer,—“How are you, old feller!” and presseth him to partake of his grog. He proffereth a prayer that the funny singer will oblige him with a particular song. The funny singer complieth; and the Gent singeth the chorus, prolonging it far beyond the proper length, to the indignation of Evans. At its conclusion, his animal spirits and enthusiastic approbation impel him to call out—

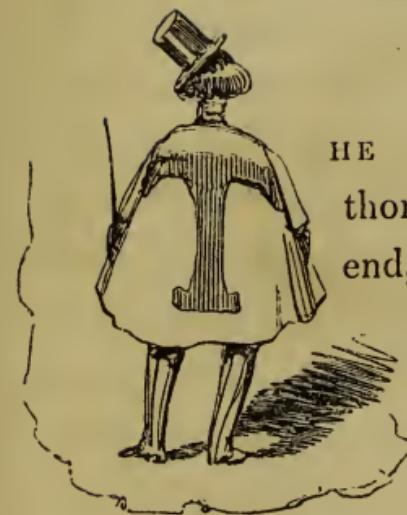
“ Bravo, Rouse !” which promoteth political dissension amongst the guests. Evans telleth him “ that he cannot have the harmony of the room disturbed by one individual”—a sentiment which the Gent applaudeth lustily, and ordereth some champagne, which he drinketh, with the singers, from a tankard. The anger of Evans is in a measure appeased. The Gent joineth in a glee at the wrong time ; but turneth away wrath by buying a copy of it when finished. He ordereth more champagne, and believeth that he is taken by the room for a “ Lord about town.” He saith he hath a pony that he will back against every other to do every thing. He talketh of actresses, and winketh mysteriously. He telleth the funny singer that if he will come and see him at his little place in the city, he will put him up to a thing or two. At last he getteth troublesome, and is coaxed away by his companions. The next morning he saith what a spree he had, and

that he sat opposite to an officer who knew one of the ballet, and had spoken to her once behind the scenes; and so he thinketh that he hath a link with the great world. But yet, upon reflection, he hath not.



CHAPTER VI.

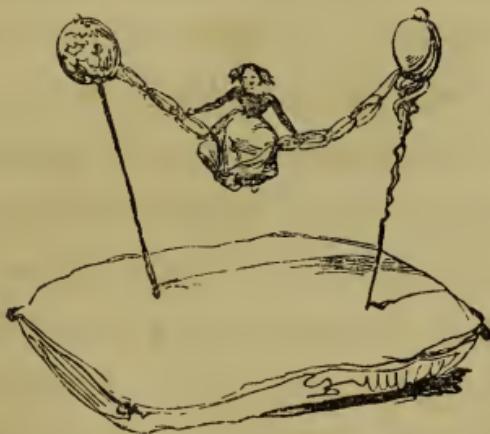
OF THE GENT IN THE OPEN AIR.



HE most popular lounging thoroughfares of the west-end, such as Regent Street, the Burlington Arcade, Bond Street, or Piccadilly, are not those in which the Gents are to be often encountered in the day-time. The ma-

jority of them have evidently occupations, which keep them somewhere until four or five o'clock, so that they never come out in their full force until dusk, except on holidays; and then the short steamboats are the best places to find them. In fine weather, they discard the staring shawl for a blue handkerchief, with white spots; and then they provide themselves with a cigar (the cigar again!), a bottle of stout, and a Sunday paper, and, from the edge of the paddle-box, or from the top of the cabin, defy the world. You can find out their locality by the vapour of the cigar, as the "smoke which so gracefully curled" showed the author of "*The Woodpecker*" that he was in the vicinity of a cottage. If you cannot discover them by this sign, you must look out for their studs—they have a great idea of studs—usually like blue raspberries, which you will find glittering in the sun. If, by chance, they wear a long stock, then they have

two pins and a chain ; but such pins ! and such a chain ! You can never see any thing like them, unless you go to the Lowther Arcade ; and there, amongst those wondrous collections



of ornamental and useful articles which strew that thoroughfare—for all the houses appear to have turned themselves and their contents out of the window—you will find similar ones ; meant, however, if we mistake not, for the back plaits of ladies' hair. And this reminds us that the Lowther Arcade is a favourite

lounge with the Gents : it is possible that, from the glittering stores here displayed, they acquire their taste for jewellery. The Lowther Arcade is to the men in the city chambers what the Burlington is to the denizens of the Albany. It is, as it were, the frontier between the two hemispheres of London life, to which position it lays some claim, inasmuch as when very crowded, a personal examination of effects sometimes takes place on passing it. And great is the throng here of an afternoon, principally composed of Gents and seedy foreigners, walking up an appetite for the incomprehensible carte of Bertholini ; or a doubtful cross between these two varieties of the human species, found, upon investigation, to be attached to billiard-tables. And, by the way, remember, that of all the scamps upon town, your billiard-table *habitués* are the darkest. Here they walk up and down for hours, loading the air with the products of combustion from their cheap cigars,



(cigars again!) puffing the smoke into every bonnet they meet, or standing at the entrance with a whip in their hands, as though they had just got off their horse, and were keeping an

appointment. But in reality they have no horse, nor do they expect any body.

There are several loungers at this part of the town, who belong neither to the race of Gents nor Foreigners, and certainly are not military, although they evidently wish to be considered so; to whom we may briefly allude; for they partake, in a slight degree, of the characteristics of the former. They wear mustaches and curious frock-coats, sometimes with dabs of braid about them. Their hair is wiry and dark, and they are constantly arranging it with their hands. Sometimes they are seen with spurs; occasionally they carry a black cane, shouldered like a gun, twisted round their arm, with its head in their pocket, held upside down, in any way but the normal one. Day after day, when it is fine; nay, year after year; there they are, true *batteurs de pavé*. You may follow them for hours, and you will never see them speak to, or recog-

nised by, any body. They do not even commune with each other. Nobody knows them ; they belong to no club, and are never seen anywhere else. And it is remarkable that, like butterflies, you only come across them in bright weather. Where they go to at other times we cannot tell ; we shall never be able to do so, until we have solved two other similar enigmas with respect to pins and bluebottles ; and their ultimate destination is, to our thinking, the greatest marvel of the present day. For the corpses of the latter, found in grocers' windows and saucers of unacknowledged poisons, and the rusty remains of the former discovered between boards, bear no comparison to the numbers that have existed. This disappearance is as remarkable as the generation of the fine woolly substance you find in the corner of your waistcoat pocket, where you have only kept a pencil-case and latch-key. But this by the way.

We have said the Gent likes to be outside

an omnibus. But he also loves the roof—literally, the roof; and he almost rejoices when he finds that the box is full, and he is obliged to perch there; for his mind appears to be brightened by his position, and many eccentricities are induced. He nods to other passengers as they pass, in a familiar manner, causing them to puzzle themselves almost into insanity during the remainder of the day, in endeavours to recollect who he could have been. He winks at the elder pupils of the



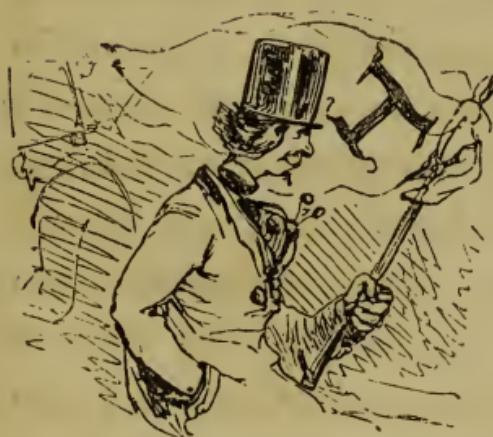
promenading Hammersmith academies, if on their road ; and tells old ladies, when they get out to go away, to give his love at home, and that he will be sure to write to them. He also has a cigar here, and he offers one to the coachman and other passengers. Before stages were exterminated the Gent preferred the box just the same ; indeed, he felt in a measure degraded if he could not get it ; and when the coachman got down he liked to hold the reins and whip in the proper manner, and show people that he was perfectly used to such a thing, and, for aught they could tell, might have a four-in-hand of his own.

A variety of this last style of Gent, whom we may call the Driving Gent, has lately come up about town. We were in the Strand the other afternoon, and suddenly heard some notes from a post-horn, very badly blown ; upon which we looked round, and saw a dog-cart approaching, with two horses to it, driven tandem

fashion, with ferret-bells on their bearing reins. On this dog-cart were four Gents—not two gentlemen and two servants, as might have been expected. They were all dressed nearly alike; hats with narrow brims, coats with large buttons, staring shawls, and trowsers of the most prominent style—very *loud* patterns, as a friend appropriately called them. Three had cigars, and the other had the horn; and it was evident that they thought they were “doing the fast thing, and no mistake.” We saw them afterwards in the Park, and chanced to follow them for some distance. The whole time they were there they never exchanged a salute with a soul—evidently they were out of their sphere; but went round and round, looked at by every body with something between a stare and a sneer, until they drove off again. The last time we saw them, they were shaking hands with a fighting man at the door of a gin-shop.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE GENT WHO GOES TO THE RACES.



HE Gent who goes to the races must not be confounded with the Sporting Gent, of whom we may speak by-and-

by. He knows nothing in the world about the running, nor indeed does he care much about

it, beyond the manner in which it may affect a chance he has in a “Derby Sweep.” But he thinks the fact of being seen there gives him a position in society, and he would not miss the races for any thing.

As the Gent who goes to the races is closely allied to the Gent we saw at the night taverns, we will describe him in the same fashion.

He buyeth a “D’Orsay blouse,” which he believeth to have been made under the Count’s own eye; a blue cravat, spotted with white wafers; a whip, and a pair of short patent boots, to produce an effect; in which he mounteth a “fast four-horse coach” from the “Garrick’s Head.” At the “Elephant and Castle,” being called “my noble sportsman” by the vender of the cards, he buyeth one, and conceiveth that he is taken for Lord Chesterfield. He asketh the vender, with a severe look, “if it is Dorling’s?” to show that he is “a downy cove,” and not to be done. He

also hath a glass of pale ale. On Clapham Common he seeth a ladies' school, and boweth to the tall pupil; whereupon the tall pupil receiveth a chiding from the English teacher for unseemly levity, and the tall pupil accuseth the half-boarder of being the true culprit. At Mitcham he hath another pale ale, and delighteth in being recognised by a man on a pony, whom he sayeth is "Bob Croft;" after which, he winketh or kisseth his hand to all the housemaids, who, on the Derby Day, invariably take two hours and a half to make the front-room bed; swinging his legs over the side seat of the roof, that his boots may dazzle the rustics. At Sutton he hath another pale ale. This fully openeth his heart, and he carolleth lustily until he reacheth the Downs, when he hopeth to be taken for one of the Guards. A gipsy woman telleth him that he hath a wicked eye, and that his company is agreeable to various female Christian names;

whereon he giveth her a shilling and the tail of a lobster, the large claw of which he putteth to his nose, and in his imagination doeth the “fast thing.”

After the race (than which he sayeth he never saw a better, albeit he hath seen but few) he thinketh it “nobby” to throw at the sticks, and insisteth that the merchant do set up a bell, a feathered cock, and a pear that discourses music most unhappily, by pulling out the stalk, and blowing through it. He seeth Lord —, whom he knoweth by sight, next to him, laden with crockery, dogs, and Napoleons, pincushions, money-boxes, and soldiers in remarkable uniforms, partaking of the Grenadier’s, Highlander’s, and Turk’s; and he striveth to knock down more things than the patrician. But in this he faileth, and intruding on the other’s aim, is called a “snob,” which, in the kindness of his heart, he resenteth not, but carrieth his winnings in

his hat back to the coach, after which he walketh about "to see the fine women."



Next he hath more lunch, until his heart openeth wider than ever, and he thinketh,

“ This is life rather ; what a fast one I am, and can’t I do it when I choose ! Hurrah ! ” He then challengeth strange men on the roofs of distant vehicles to take wine, because he knoweth “ they are the right sort,” and finisheth by trying a hornpipe on the roof of his own, in all the enthusiasm of ale, sun, lobster salad, dust, champagne, and a post-horn.

Going home, his humour knoweth no bounds. He tieth his handkerchief to his stick for a flag, until he loseth his hat, when he tieth his handkerchief round his head. He sitteth on the post-horn, and causeth it to resemble a ram’s. He pelteth old gentlemen driving four-wheeled chaises with snuff-boxes, and distributeth pincushions to the domestics, breaking windows withal. He liketh to know who any one is who upsetteth him by offensive speech ; and tumbleth to the ground at Sutton, where he wisheth for several pale ales while the coach stoppeth to cool the wheels,

which follow the example of the passengers, and begin to smoke. Here he danceth a lively measure in the road before a landau, and smileth wickedly at the occupants. Getting troublesome, he is put in the inside, with the helper, the hamper, and the dirty plates, where he remaineth until he reacheth London, when he sayeth, "Let's make a night of it." But the manufacturing process is scarcely worthy the reader's attention. The next day he sayeth, "I must dine at Bertholini's for two months to come, and give up suppers."



CHAPTER VIII.

OF CERTAIN GENTS IN SOCIETY.



NCE, when like Mr. Tennyson we were “waiting for the train at Coventry,” and thinking of Lady Godiva—the Gents would like to have peeped at Godiva—we saw a penny show on the ground floor of an empty house in a principal street of that good city. It consisted

of “A Happy Family”—a collection of various animals, of different natures, in one cage—like the travelling menagerie opposite the National Gallery, but on a much larger scale. The members of the “family” were quietly enjoying the pleasure of each other’s society, with the exception of two monkeys, one of whom sat sullenly scowling at some mice, as he hugged himself up into a ball in every body’s way ; and the other created much discomfort, from time to time, by rushing about in a frantic manner, running over his neighbours, performing totally useless feats of agility, and deporting himself generally in an absurd and unseemly fashion.

Now, taking monkeys to be the Gents of the animal kingdom, we were pleased to see how closely they resemble their human brethren :—for the Gents you encounter in society are of two kinds. Taking an assembly as the place where you would be most likely to come upon them, you will find them either endeavouring

to “do the grand,” by not joining in the current amusements of the evening ; or overstepping all bounds of ordinary behaviour—“going it,” to use their own words—and committing every kind of preposterous and silly offence against the received rules of society.

If you talk to the first of these, whom we may call the dreary Gent, you will always find that he has been “dining with some fellows he knows ;” or “having a weed with a man ;” and you will be reminded of cigars. He affects a drawling indifferent tone of voice, which he considers cool and fashionable ; and he prefers keeping outside the drawing-room door, upon the landing, because “he don’t want to be bored to dance.” He wears broad tails to his coat, and most probably the buttonholes are brought together over his chest by a small snaffle ; whilst, hanging by a bit of chain from his waistcoat pocket, is a little broquet key, made like a dog’s head, the nose of which winds up his watch.

His stock is of figured satin, very gay, and very narrow, and with long twisted ends, in which is stuck a large pin—usually a claw holding a stone, as big and as white as a pea of Wenham ice from a sherry cobbler. He will ask you, “if you were up at Putney on Tuesday ;” and if you were not, and do not even know what great event took place on that day, be sure that he regards you with great contempt. Like all Gents, he has a great notion of champagne, which at supper he drinks by himself from a tumbler as he would drink it at a night tavern, as aforesaid, from a tankard.

Very opposite to him is the joyous Gent, whom we may term the Perrot of private life. He always gives us the notion of a ballet-dancer spoiled, especially in *Pastorale* or the *Polka* ; in which latter dance, if he does not happen to have for his partner a young lady of determined spirit, and a keen discrimination of right and wrong, he will launch off into all sorts of toe-

and-heel tomfooleries, such as simple people used to perpetrate when the Polka first broke out—such as you may still see, after supper, at Jullien's and Vauxhall, or at the “Gothics,” and other ten-and-sixpenny demi-public hops, of the same genus, even at the Hanover Square Rooms. The joyous Gent is very great indeed in cheap dancing-academy figures. He knows the “Caledonians” and the “Lancers;” he loves the “Spanish dance,” and patronises the gloomy, and almost extinct “Cellarius.” And we will make any reasonable wager, that before the quadrille begins, he will bow to his partner, and then to the corner lady, or the one on his left.

The social acquirements of the joyous Gent are many, and he delights in every opportunity of exhibiting them. His strongest points are his imitations of popular performers, especially Buckstone, in whose manner he says, “well I never!—did you ever!—oh never!—oh wlaw!”

in a manner that elicits the loudest applause.

Next he attempts Macready, as follows :—

“ Nay—dearest—nay—if thou—wouldst have—me
paint

The home—to which—could love—fulfil—its
prayers,—

This hand—would lead—thee—listen.”

Then Mr. T. P. Cooke, when he pitches his voice in a low falsetto, hitches his trowsers, says, “ My dear eyes ! what ! Sewsan ! ” and affirms that “ no true heart is altered by the gilt swabs on the shoulders, but is ever open to the cry of a female in distress.”

Possibly the next will be Mr. Paul Bedford, when he rolls his *r* and says, “ Co.ne along, my r-r-r-r-rummy cove ; come along comealong—comealong ! how are you ? how d'ye do ? here we are ! I'm a looking at you like bricksywicksywicksies—I believe you my boy-y-y-y-y ! ”

And directly afterwards he turns up his nose with his forefinger, and looks like Mr. Wright,

as he exclaims, “Come, I say you know, guv’nor, none o’ them larks eh! you didn’t ought to was.”

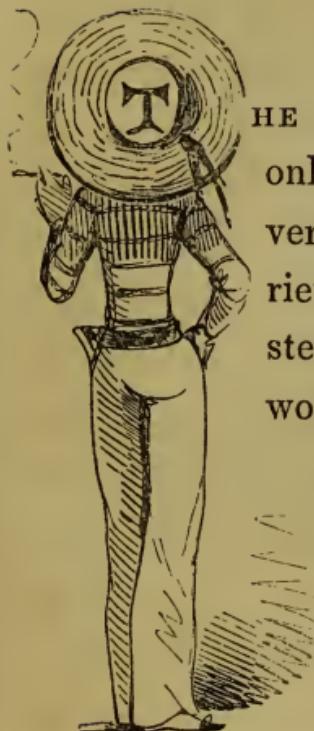
All these are sure to be received with the greatest enthusiasm: and as he usually gives the name of the actor he is about to imitate, before he commences, he is spared the unpleasantry attendant upon the remark of some guest, who says “Capital! famous! it’s Keeley himself,” when the ingenious Gent is attempting an impersonation of Farren.

But after all his surest card is Buckstone.



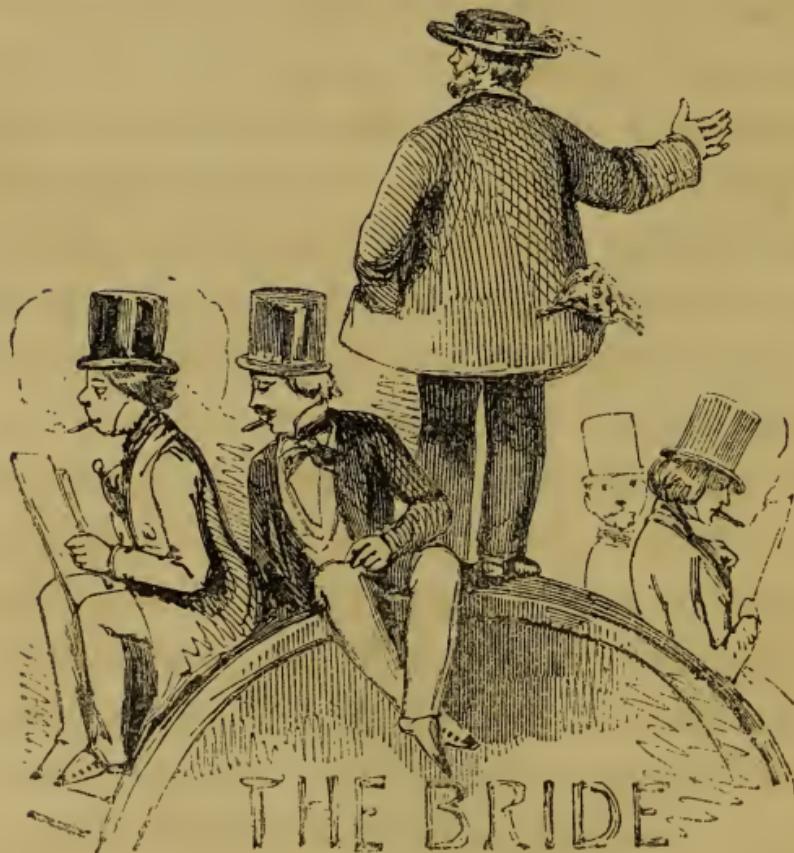
CHAPTER IX.

OF GENTS ON THE RIVER.



HE grand gathering of Gents is only to be met with as one universal *réunion* of all their varieties, on board the Sunday steamboats. No city in the world produces so many holiday specimens of tawdry vulgarity as London: and the river appears to be the point towards which all the countless myriads converge. Their

strenuous attempts to ape gentility—a bad style of word, we admit, but one peculiarly adapted to our purpose—are to us more painful than ludicrous: and the labouring man, dressed in



the usual costume of his class is, in our eyes, far more respectable than the Gent, in his dreary efforts to assume a style and tournure which he is so utterly incapable of carrying out.

When joining a steamboat excursion the Gent never sits on the regular benches placed for that purpose. He prefers the top of the cabin-door—the steps of the paddle-boxes—the platform on which the steersman is elevated, and the like situations. Here you may always see him with a newspaper and a bottle of stout, a light blue stock, and, being Sunday, a very new hat, and a pair of white trowsers: with Berlin gloves, which he carries in his hand. For, indeed, not being used to them, nothing presents so perfect an idea of tolerated discomfort as a Sunday Gent in a pair of gloves. We can only compare the appearance of his hands, when suffering under the infliction, to those of a Guy Fawkes, or the tailors' dressed-up dummies before alluded to.

But there are also aquatic Gents, who row in boats on regatta afternoons, and hope to be



mistaken for "Leanders." Their principal characteristics when on the river, in this phase,

are propensities to wear pink silk jerseys, and silk caps. Now and then they have been known to row in white kid gloves. But they may soon be detected ; and are especially found out by a race of amphibious aborigines who affect the river and its banks, known to the natives as “Coalies” and “Bargees ;” and who call them *tailors*, and make unpleasant allusion to goose and board, whereupon the anger of the Gents being called forth, they retort, asking of the latter *amphibia* above alluded to, “who eat the puppy pie under Marlow bridge ?” In which query, it is presumed, lies a hidden taunt of rankling venom ; for the “Bargees” immediately indulge in language which would shock any one of a properly constituted mind, very dreadfully—and call the Gents *sweeps*, not always without some adjective prefixed, more powerful than polite.

River Gents are very fond of talking of their “rooms ;” which means the rooms rented

by Oxford and Cambridge rowing men, for their meetings previous to matches, starting, &c. With these, and the members of them, the Gent professes to have an intimate acquaintance, albeit most likely he never entered them, and would in all probability be snubbed out, or possibly kicked, if he made the attempt.

Another great feature in the natures of the river Gents, is that of belonging to four-oared cutter-clubs, with startling names; such as, the Argonauts, the Corsairs, &c. They have their boats very elaborately adorned—red and blue; and lots of gilding being considered the thing; with the arms of the club—the only ones with which they have, in any way, any thing to do—being emblazoned everywhere. In such clubs the members row up to Putney, dine, get drunk, sing out of window, and come back in an omnibus, leaving their waterman to bring the boat home the next day.

The river Gent always knows a man with

a yacht, with whom he has once been as far as Gravesend. This enables him to talk about the "bargee;" and even when he thinks he is entirely amongst the unsophisticated, to launch into hazardous remarks about a "flying-jib," and the build of the *Prima Donna*. And if he in any way intends to make a great effect, he has been frequently known to take the name of Lord Alfred Paget in vain; which is a great thing, not only with river Gents, but all sorts of city yacht men generally.



CHAPTER X.

OF THE GENT AT THE CASINOS.



IT is probable that, at some time or the other, you have been at a fête in Paris.

Because if you have, you will recollect the gay "Bal de Paris" that was lighted up so tastefully when it became dark. You will recall the order that reigned

there, so different to the vulgar jostling and dreary riot of the “Crown and Anchor” at Greenwich Fair. If you have not been there, figure to yourself an enormous tent, say one hundred feet long, supported by gilt pillars, with pretty festoons, and surrounded by trophies and tricoloured flags, of red, blue, and white calico all round. The floor is neatly boarded ; and in the centre, an excellent orchestra, of a dozen musicians, performing all the most popular quadrilles, waltzes, and polkas of Paris. Five sous is charged for entrance, and an extra demand of five sous is made each time you dance ; when you are not considered as transgressing etiquette in asking any fair one that your choice may fall upon. The utmost order prevails. Indeed, the municipal guards in attendance with their fierce mustaches and tiger-skin helmets, will soon march you off between them if you overstep decorum.

With respect to the refreshments, there is

not the immense bar which we see at the Greenwich Fair and Moulsey Race-course dancing assemblies, covered with cold boiled-beef, ham, fowls, bottled-porter, pipes, and crockery ; but then there is a small tent aside from the grand one, for lemonade, *sirop de groseilles*, wine, coffee, and Rheims biscuits, which has an air of refinement never met with in England at meetings of this kind. Dancing is the sole object of the company ; and dance they do ; and so did we, too, once upon a time (as soon as we got over our thorough English idea that every body was looking at us), and we can safely say we enjoyed ourselves much more there than we had done at any dashing evening parties in London. And then the practice in French conversation which it affords ! You can speak so easily, so fluently, to a pretty grisette in the middle of a dance, and under the influence of a bottle of *vin ordinaire*, at twelve sous ; it beats all the masters, believe

us ; and we speak from experience. But all this by the way. All have their hobbies, and pretty grisettes are ours.

Few have watched these agreeable dances without lamenting the absence of such things from our English festivals : we believe it is the Gents alone who have proved the obstacles to their proper introduction. For they would never keep quiet, and simply enjoy themselves. They would think it necessary to "have a spree ;" and could not exist ten minutes without surreptitiously lighting a cigar, for any consideration. He would think that he was not "nobby" if he did not have some wretched champagne : and this miserable mess, getting into his head, would lead him into all manner of offensive behaviour. For no Gent can stand much wine, at any time ; and Gent's wine in particular, such as Casino champagne, fearfully upsets them.

When we first heard that M. Laurent was

going to start a shilling concert and dance we were much disquieted ; for we knew at what a rampant pitch Gentism would arrive there. But it was somewhat gratifying to see that the sensible behaviour of a few strong-minded visitors somewhat awed them into propriety. Still there are many who still assemble ; and the use of this chapter is, that you may be shown how to know and avoid them.

The Casino Gent especially likes a white over-coat, short, with large buttons ; and under this he disposes a gay shawl, so as to look like the collar of a waistcoat. He carries a short stick, and this he never parts with under any pretence ; but in a polka you will see it high in air above the whirling confusion of dances, and by this signal may trace his progress about the room.

His polka is not of the first order ; it savours more of the dancing academy than the drawing-room ; and he has scarcely yet



given up the fandango atrocities before alluded to, that disgraced the polka on its first introduction into England. Hence you will at times still see him "kicking up behind and before" in an absurd manner, that "Old Joe,"

of Ethiopian celebrity, could scarcely have outdone.

This Gent is not very clever at the *deux temps*. Before he knew what it was, he used to imagine that certain fools were dancing the polka to a waltz time; but now he has found



out his error, albeit he still looks upon it with a sort of contemptuous expression, such as unpleasant people in general adopt when they

are called upon to admire something popular that they cannot do themselves. In the intervals of the dances he promenades the room, laughing loudly about nothing particular, and hitting his friends on the back with his stick, to attract their attention. And no true Gent, got up as we have described, ever entered the Casino but he did not firmly believe that he was *the* man of the assembly. Hence two Gents will always look savage at one another when they meet.

Au reste, the Gent is soon subdued, when too lively, by the proper authorities: and he has great belief in the power of an acquaintance with Mr. Henry Mott, who delights in elegant white cravats, and is the head master of the ceremonies, nearest the band and the sherry-cobblers.

With respect to other public balls, you will not meet many Gents at Weippert's, or the St. James's. The men there are too strong

for them ; not physically, but in social position ; and the *lorettes* of these assemblies have quick eyes at detecting snobbishness of any kind. We have seen one or two Gents at either place ; but they always looked especially wretched—as much out of their place as a toadstool in a conservatory. The gentlemen did not insult them ; they only tacitly objected to be vis-à-vis to them, and quietly withdrew their partners from the set, until the Gents stood alone.

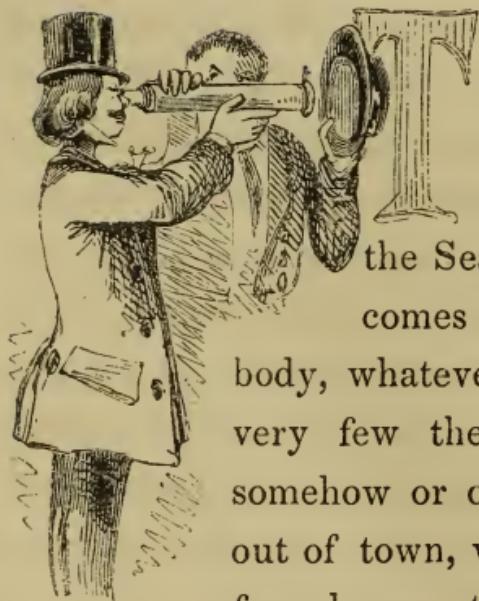
They are in greater force at *bals masqués*, in and out of costume. Many Gents conceive that going in a scarlet coat and top-boots, and now and then shouting “ Yoicks !” constitutes the fast thing : hence there is always one of this kind. Others adopt large noses, and false mustaches, which they think is “ doing it—rather !” But you never see them in characteristic or original costumes ; nor, lacking them, do they even adhere to a recognised evening

toilet. They prefer their beloved railway trowsers, and flaring stocks and shawls, and centre all their notions of full-dress in a pale-tot. M. Jullien is gradually changing all this: we trust he will not stop until he places the masked ball—“bal marsk” the Gent calls it—on a level with those of Paris. But then the complimentary admissions must be weeded; and the authorities must learn that it is not at all necessary to engage a few wretched supernumeraries from the theatres, in dingy wardrobe costumes, to support the festivity of the evening. All low people, including Gents, get drunk; and all drunken people are miserable nuisances.

Note.—If ever you see two Gents dancing together at a *bal masqué*, you are at liberty to kick and insult them, with every opprobrious epithet.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE GENT AT THE SEA-SIDE.



HERE is a period in the year of London existence, when that portion of it termed the *Season*, *par excellence*, comes to an end with every body, whatever their station; for very few there are who do not, somehow or other, contrive to get out of town, when the great rush from home—that flight of the soul of the departed *Season*—is at its height. Every

body who has not already gone, is going ; nobody will own to staying in town, even if compelled to do so. Houses are shut up, blinds newspapered, and furniture tied up in bags : in fact, to make a wretched joke, whilst the family is on the Rhine, its lamps and ottomans are all in Holland. There are no more carriages whirling about the west-end streets : no more thundering knocks echoing all day, and night, too, for the matter of that, in the squares. You write letters, and get no answers : you make calls, and find nobody at home, but a servant on board wages, who runs out into the area to look at you before she answers the door, in great astonishment. You think it almost disreputable to be seen about, so you follow the rest, and go away.

This feeling extends throughout all classes of society : and going down lower and lower, at last reaches the Gent, who copies the gentleman, but sees, as usual, every thing through a

wrong medium. In fact, his reflection is that of a spoon, in more senses than one: making the most outrageous images of the original, distorting all the features, but still preserving a strange sort of identity.

The Gent has two favourite places of sea-side resort, according to his idiosyncrasies: if joyous, he goes to Gravesend; if dreary, to Ramsgate. Margate is neither one thing nor the other, and Brighton is really too respectable. He cannot there show off: and to show off is the battle of the Gent's life. But Gravesend is delicious. The transit is cheap and rapid; the lodgings are moderate; an effect in dress can be made at an easy rate; and, above all, there is that largest ornamental chalk-pit in the world, Rosherville.

We are, perhaps, wrong in putting Gravesend under the head of sea-side resorts: but the Gent considers it to be so. And, indeed, the baths there offer peculiar advantages,

combining the properties of both fresh and salt water, with the impurities of both, and the attributes of neither. Yellow slippers may also be purchased in the town ; and this circumstance induces the belief, that the neighbouring water is the sea ; a delusion which appears common not only amongst the Gents, but most of the settlers. This, however, by the way : we were speaking of Rosherville, the paradise which mainly draws the Gents from town.

The costume of the Gent at Rosherville is analogous to the one he wears at the promenade concerts, with the exception, that he has a more airy cravat, of brighter hue, and smokes perpetually, except in the ball-room ; and he would do that, thinking it was “the thing,” if a board did not warn him : showing that such warning was found absolutely necessary. And here, whilst listening to the “military band” of the first detachment of the

Light Coldstream Indefatigables, he puts his hat on one side, sits on a table, and tapping his short boot, which discovers its form through his trowsers, with his equally curtailed cane, believes, as usual, that he is *the* man of the assembly.

The Gent has several fashions in the dancing at Rosherville, different from those of the Casino. In the first place, he takes off his hat, and hangs it on a peg, if there is one vacant; if not, he leaves it at the bar. Then he bows to his partner, and, if he knows her very well, courts at the same time: and, subsequently, he salutes the corners with great politeness, previous to commencing the first set. But this particular set does not stand very high in estimation. In common with other balls for the *basse classe*, its component Gents prefer dances of intricate and abnormal fashion: and so it is here also considered *ton* to perform the *Caledonians* (which nobody ever

knows all through, except the master of the ceremonies), the *Lancers*, *Spanish Dances*, the *Cellarius*, even the *Gavotte*, and other frantic arrangements of gasping professors, including, of course, “*La Polka*,” as it is always termed, in their parlance. And on “*Gala Nights*,” still more wonderful evolutions are gone through, all of which are due to the inventive genius of the aforesaid inimitable M.C., whose friendship the Gent especially prizes. For at Rosherville that great man is to be seen — actually, really to be seen — walking like an ordinary person, amongst ordinary fellow creatures. He is no longer a phantasy of mental conception—not that zephyr in pumps bounding amidst new-laid eggs and tea-things, or matchlessly performing his Marine Horn-pipe in top-boots, or Chinese Fandango in handcuffs, or Milanese Fling in the double jack-chains ; but a substantial reality, — the glass of fashion, the mould of form, whom we

can never fancy putting off the pumps of ceremony for the high-lows of necessity—in a word, THE BARON NATHAN.

The Gent at Ramsgate would be the last to persuade that it is really a dull place. He is one of the most strenuous upholders of that greatest of all popular delusions suffered to go unchallenged, that English sea-side watering-places generally are pleasant spots to emigrate to, and Ramsgate in particular. We know, as far as we are concerned, that we once underwent transportation for seven days to that penal settlement; and that we never before suffered (we expect in common with every body else) from such a ghastly gasping after the belief that we were “doing a holiday,” as the Gent would say, as during that time.

How the Gent makes up his mind to go to Ramsgate at all we cannot make out; but there he always is: and he divides the measure of his revelry thereat into four goes of excitement:

Going on the sands ; Going out sailing ; Going on the pier ; and Going to Sachett's.

Going on the sands is the weakest of the Gent's pastimes : but he says, with a loud laugh, that it is to see the ladies bathe. Elsewhere it would be confined to watching children bury one another in the sand, with small wooden spades—a performance which, like a pantomime, however interesting on first representation, somewhat flags in interest upon repetition. The Gent usually takes two chairs to rest upon, and stares hard at every body else, especially the females, the while he sketches feeble designs with his short stick, which he never by any means parts with, on the sand.

Going out sailing is also a slow business—slower than a few friends after a dinner-party for a carpet polka ; or a standard five-act-play ; or a wedding breakfast ; or the outside half of yesterday's *Times* ; or a book written with a “high moral purpose ;” or a Charing-Cross-

to-the-Bank omnibus—and that is saying a good deal: the Gent, however, likes it: for then he puts on a shirt ruled with blue ink, the collar of which he turns down: and talks of “jibs,” and “tacks,” and “sheets,” and also alludes to the man he knows who keeps a yacht. And he takes his cigar—his loved cigar—as



soon as he leaves the harbour. And as he leaves the harbour he stands in an attitude, and believes that the young ladies who show their ankles on the pier imagine him to be a Red Rover.

Perhaps *Going on the pier* is the Ramsgate Gent's greatest treat: because then he can put on his gay clothes, and once more think that he is rather the thing. But in this the Gent makes a great mistake. He dresses but once in the day, and then puts on a frock-coat, which he wears to dinner, and all the evening; not exactly understanding, we expect, what is the real difference between morning and evening toilets. For as Gentlemen usually dress after a walk, so do Gents dress before one: and if they do not appear in their "best" to walk up and down the pier—which at Ramsgate is the chief straw that the sinking *ennuyés* clutch at—and stare superciliously at all whom they do not know, they think they are snobs—the snob

being to the Gent what the Gent is to the Gentleman.

The prevalence of Gents at Ramsgate, in such numbers that the fine weather brings them out like bluebottles, is easily accounted for. There is a certain class of families who go to Ramsgate every year, because they were there the last. They come either from the Pancras-cum-Bloomsbury district of London, or having shops, or ware-rooms, or counting-houses in the City, live in suburban villas comfortably off, and believing greatly in all conventional rules of society, getting perhaps once a year to the Opera, thinking a great deal of Mansion-house balls, and believing to a great degree in fashion-books. Well, these good folks affect Ramsgate greatly, and so take their families with them. The girls of this class pass muster pretty well; Clapham or Chiswick academies teaching them certain school accomplishments, which pass current for

a decent education amongst their equals—but the boys are always Gents. The same feeling which induces their parents to believe that the more showily they can set out their dinner-table the higher they rise in social life, makes these sons imagine that two or three dear and flashy articles of dress place them on a level with the well-born and well-bred Gentleman. Accustomed in their own spheres to take the lead, they will not go where they meet men who attain very good stations in society without large studs or noisy-patterned cravats; and constantly associating, one with the other, they get lost beyond all redemption. And of these is the migratory young-man society of Ramsgate chiefly composed.

Of the same class is the Gent at Boulogne. He is at first a long time being persuaded to go there; because he knows that his ignorance of the language will be an awful drop to his consequence, and bring him down at once to

his elements in a very humiliating manner. But after a while, finding that every body else knows something about it but himself, he determines to go. And in this wise doth he deport himself.

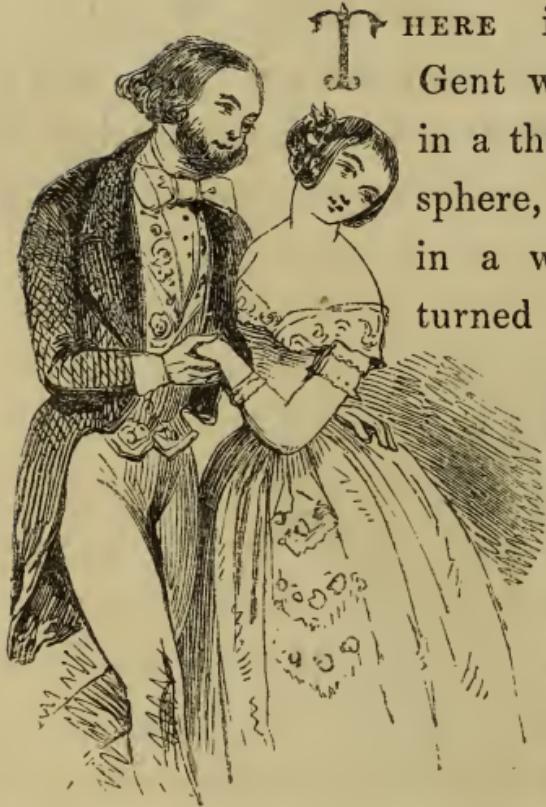
Imprimis he alloweth his mustaches to grow, which giveth him the look of an officer-lover in a farce at the Eagle, but assimilateth to the foreigner in nothing. He delighteth in brutal conduct to the native functionaries, which he taketh to be a fine display of national spirit, and thinketh that they are impressed with respect for him thereby. He calleth the *vin ordinaire* “rot,” but drinketh brandy to intoxication. He shouteth with hoarse joyless laughter at French peculiarities, and thinketh that, by so doing, he displayeth a fine-natured *naïveté*. He deemeth the greatest discovery ever made to be that of a tavern whereat British stout is retailed; and thinketh that he maketh a joke of excellent pungency when he

saith “Waterloo,” to a French soldier. He careth not for the indigenous hotels, but loveth better the English boarding-house, where he can have “a good John Bull joint, and no French kickshaws:” John Bull being represented generally as a vulgar top-booted man verging on apoplexy, with, evidently, few ideas of refinement, obstinate and hard-natured; but the Gent conceiveth that upon occasions it is ennobling to profess attachment to him.



CHAPTER XII.

NOTES OF CERTAIN OTHER GENTS.



HERE is a species of Gent who, moving only in a third or fourth rate sphere, goes to a party in a white cravat and turned up wristbands, and carries his hat into the room because he had heard that Gentlemen do so. He is generally an immense card.

We chanced to stand next to a specimen of this kind, one

evening, in a quadrille, and the only remark we heard him make was inquiring of his part-



ner, after two or three false starts, whether she preferred dancing on a carpet or the bare

boards: to which the young lady replied, having looked down to see what the floor was (that she might not “put her foot in it,” figuratively speaking), that she preferred a carpet, she thought: and this was the beginning and end of the conversation.

A sample of this variety fixed himself upon us once, as we were taking a stroll, merely upon the intimacy of a casual party introduction two or three weeks before, where we had procured him some trifle at supper, solely because we did not choose to run the chance of allowing him to approach the table and stand near the pretty girl over whose white shoulder we stretched our arm to help him. We found out that he was minutely particular about his deportment in the street, and a pretty treat we gave him. First of all we rattled our stick against the area railings of the houses: then we bought penny bunches of cherries at the stalls, and munched them as we went along,

continually pressing him to take some, or propelling the stones, six at a time, along the pavement in front of us. We cut off the angles of all the squares, and ran very fast across all the crossings; and then took off a little boy's cap, and carried it a short way with us, to provoke a few salutations in our wake, of that pleasing and forcible kind which only little boys in the streets can give with such piquancy of expression. We finally got rid of him by insisting upon stopping at the corner of Berners Street to see *Punch*—an exhibition we never, by any means, omit playing audience to: although we know many Gents who think their station in society would be lost for ever, were they once observed taking an interest in any thing half so common.

There is a peculiar race of Gents to be seen, through the windows, lounging in tobacco-shops; some leaning against the counter, others seated on tubs, or occupying the like

positions. This employment is another variety of what Gents think "fast."



The presiding goddess of this temple of smoke is a scantily educated woman, who has

been more or less pretty at some time or another ; but still retains, it would seem, sufficient attraction to draw the Gents about her. Here they will pass hours, finding intense pleasure in her commonplace uninteresting conversation—retailing dull jokes, worn-out anecdotes, or vapid inevitable puns to each other ; and staring at any casual purchaser who may enter the shop, as if he were an intruder on their domain.

There are the Gents, also, who are afterwards seen in the theatres at half-price : in the slips during the performances, and in the saloon during the *entr'acte*—the class who, whilst they carry on brisk conversation and smart repartees (of a sort) with the least reputable in public life, form the vapid nonentities of private society when females are present. They are men, to use a phrase more expressive than elegant, strongly addicted to *bear parties*—who think “a glass of grog and a weed” the acme of social

enjoyment, and who look upon all entertainments that throw them into the society of ladies, or, indeed, any one of intellect and refinement, as bores. They are the great men at the night taverns, before alluded to. All that is, however, harmless in its way ; for the majority of those houses are exceedingly well conducted : and, indeed, it is only the Gents of the lowest sphere who deem it spirited to mix themselves up, in other resorts, with the ruffians of the ring and the most degraded of either sex, in an atmosphere of oaths and odours, where indecency is mistaken for broad humour and dull slang for first-rate wit.

It is the cheap tailor who advertises, to whom this style of Gent goes for his clothes. He is caught by the poetry and the names of the articles related ; as well as of the establishment, whether it be “ Paletot Palace,” “ the Kingdom of Kerseymere,” or “ the Walhalla of waistcoats,” as it is termed in those small but lively works

of fiction thrown with such unsparing liberality through the windows of railway omnibuses. The following is an announcement peculiar to the Frankensteins of these strange creations. We have written it, and present the copyright to any of them that may choose to adopt it.

TRIUMPHS OF BRITISH VALOUR.

Fame's trumpet says we've had victories enough,
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But first to London they came with their retinues
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Twelve shillings new—it surely can't be dear,
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And recollect—old suits to be return'd
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CHAPTER XIII.

THE GENTS VIEWED WITH RESPECT TO THEIR EXTINCTION.



ANY influential member, bent upon being of service to his country, would bring in a bill for the "Total Repeal of the Gents," he would confer the greatest benefit on society; for until they are entirely knocked on the head, our public amusements

can never be conducted with the propriety which distinguishes those of Paris.

We believe, with sorrow, that this offensive race of individuals is peculiar to our own country: we know of no foreign type answering to them. If persons establishing resorts where they mostly congregate, could take out an assurance against Gents, as they do against fire, what a blessing it would be!

We think it would be an excellent plan for respectable electors to make members pledge themselves to vote for the heavy taxation of various articles in which Gents chiefly delight. In this tariff we would have blue stocks; large breast-pins; snaffle coat-studs; curled hair; collar-galled hacks; Spanish dances; Cellarius waltzes; Caledonian quadrilles; lithographed beauties, plain and coloured; cheap cigars; large pattern trowsers; gay under-waistcoats or "vests;" thick sticks; short canes; walking-whips; and boxes of omnibuses, as distinguished

from omnibus boxes. If the Gents could not enjoy these things without paying heavy prices for them they would go without; for a great effect at a small outlay is the main intention of all their follies.

And we also think it might be serviceable towards the great end of putting Gents out altogether, when any one chances to say, "I know a Gent," to exclaim immediately either "You know a *what?*?" in accents of horror, or "You look as if you did!" in a tone of contempt, to bring him to a sense of his miserable position —in whichever way you think will best work upon his feelings.

Doudney, Moses, Prew, and Hyams! patrons as ye are of literature generally, and poets especially! by whose influence the taste of the Gents is in some measure guided, help us to effect some little reform! Do not, we beseech you, allow your emblazoned window-tickets to lead this wretched race into such strange ideas

respecting the “fashions” as they are wont to indulge in. Abolish all those little pasteboard scutcheons which point out your gaudy fabrics as “Novel,” “The Style,” “Splendid,” “The Thing,” “Parisian,” and the like. Cut their waistcoats, in charity, as if you intended them for gentlemen instead of Gents. Reform your own bills, and appeal not to the sympathies with such wild innovations: and persuade the literary Gent who writes those charming little *brochures* about your establishments—whispered to be the light contributor to Blackwood’s Magazine—which are presented gratuitously with the periodicals, to lead the minds of the Gents into another channel. Let them no longer imagine that the usual method of dressing of an acknowledged leader of fashion—the gentleman of the greatest taste in England—is in a puckered six-and-threepenny blouse with braid round the pockets (for such is the garment that bears his name), a rainbow-tinted

stock, drugget-pattern trowsers, and nine-and-sixpenny broad-brimmed hats. Do this, and send all your present stock to America.

Editors of Sporting Papers! you are renowned for obliging courtesy: assist the good work with your able pens, by never allowing the term "Sporting Gent" to appear in your columns, whether he undertakes to drive a pony to death, match his dog to be torn to pieces last in a struggle, or advance a pecuniary inducement for two savages to pummel each other's heads to jelly. Did you ever see a "Sporting Gent?" You must have done so; and you have noted his coarse hands, his flattened fingers, and dubby nails; his common green coat, his slang handkerchief, and his low hat: his dreary conversation entirely confined to wiredrawn accounts of wagers he has won, and matches he can make for any thing. Never give him a chance of attaining publicity, and he will go out and disap-

pear altogether, leaving the coast clear for gentlemen.

We are not altogether without a hope that, by strong and energetic measures, the Gents may be put down—this would be a real “improved condition of the people” much to be desired. A Court of Propriety might be established at which Gents could be convicted of misdemeanors against what is usually considered *comme-il-faut*. And punishments might be awarded proportionate to the nature of the offence. For a heavy one a Gent might be transported for fourteen days into good society, where he would be especially wretched; for a light one he might enter into heavy recognizances not to smoke cigars on omnibuses or steamers, not to wear any thing but quiet colours, not to say he knew actresses, and not to whistle when he entered a tavern, or, with his fellows, laugh loudly at nothing, when ensconced in his box there, for any time not

exceeding the same period. A Court of Requests would be of no use ; for it is of little avail requesting the Gents to do any thing. Compulsion alone would reform them.

We trust the day will come—albeit we feel it will not be in our time—when the Gent will be an extinct species ; his “effigies,” as the old illustrated books have it, being alone preserved in museums. And then this treatise may be regarded as those zoological papers are now which treat of the Dodo : and the hieroglyphics of coaches and horses, pheasants, foxes’ heads, and sporting dogs found on the huge white buttons of his wrapper, will be regarded with as much curiosity, and possibly will give rise to as much discussion and investigation as the ibises and scarabæi in the Egyptian Room of the British Museum. We hope it may be so.

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* * * * *

I came—I went to the shops at eventide—I saw—and I relented. Cigar-smoking, among the race of those whom I am proud to term my immediate pupils—the men who, to be decent, shave daily—is just as it should be; but the junior smokers don't seem to be half awake yet! I confess the appalling, and—to me—most mortifying fact: but I can't account for it. They don't know a good cigar from a bad one; they *paw* the beauties in a box as though they hadn't the use of their eyes; they bruise, crush, squeeze, pinch, crack, toss about and otherwise grievously maltreat, what ought to be touched with as much delicacy as a waxen rosebud! Some of them light the wrong end; many of them impiously bite off the twist; and most of them smoke two-thirds of the right side of a Cigar before a spark of fire has touched the left. This convinced me that my business in this world was not yet done; and I determined on reprinting my Golden Rules, in that form for which they were originally intended. Here they are, and if the incipient smoking public do not take advantage of them, I can't help it, and things must take their course.

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